

GAD - Generalized Anxiety Disorder

GAD-C COMPLICATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand some of the complications associated with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD).

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss that GAD can cause major disruptions in family and work relationships. Refer to counseling or behavioral health services as appropriate.
2. Discuss that GAD can cause many physical symptoms such as chest pain, dizziness, abdominal pain, headaches, jaw pain, palpitations, shortness of breath, bruxism, broken teeth, fatigue, sleep disruption, and other physical symptoms. Generalized anxiety disorder is frequently misdiagnosed as cardiac or gastrointestinal disease.
3. Explain that untreated GAD may worsen and result in other depressive and/or anxiety disorders, and suicidal ideation.
4. Discuss the high incidence of substance abuse/dependence as a co-morbid condition with GAD.

GAD-CM CASE MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family/caregiver will understand the importance of integrated case management in GAD.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss roles and responsibilities of each member of the care team including the patient, family/caregiver, and providers in the case management plan.
2. Explain the coordination and integration of resources and services in developing and implementing the case management plan.
3. Explain the need to obtain the appropriate releases of information necessary to support integrated case management and to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality. **Refer to AF-CON.**

GAD-CUL CULTURAL/SPIRITUAL ASPECTS OF HEALTH

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the impact and influences cultural and spiritual traditions, practices, and beliefs have on health and wellness.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss the potential role of cultural/spiritual traditions, practices and beliefs in achieving and maintaining health and wellness. Refer to clergy services, traditional healers, or other culturally appropriate resources.
2. Explain that traditional medicines/treatments should be reviewed with the healthcare provider to determine if there are positive or detrimental interactions with prescribed treatment. Explain that the medical treatment plan must be followed as prescribed to be effective.

GAD-DP DISEASE PROCESS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will have a basic understanding of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD).

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that GAD is a primary disorder in which the patient has a constant and severe sense of anxiety/fear which is not attributable to a specific stressor and is significant enough to interfere with work, home, or social functioning.
2. Explain that the essential feature of GAD is excessive anxiety and uncontrollable worry even about ordinary or routine activities, and is associated with symptoms of hyper-arousal, including:
 - a. restlessness/ feeling keyed up
 - b. muscle tension
 - c. irritability
 - d. difficulty concentrating
 - e. disturbed sleep
 - f. an unusual number of physical complaints for which a source cannot be found.
3. Explain that the intensity, duration, and frequency of the anxiety and worry are far out of proportion to the actual likelihood or impact of the feared event.
4. Discuss that in many cases, GAD is a neurochemical/biological disorder and may not be the result of the patient's personality or inappropriate parenting.
5. Explain that the symptoms of GAD may get better or worse at different times; symptoms will often worsen when the patient is more stressed, but symptoms may not be related to outside stressors. Explain that there is a tendency for GAD to worsen over time if it is not treated, but there are effective treatments available.

Refer to GAD-TX.

GAD-EX EXERCISE

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the role of increased physical activity in the treatment of generalized anxiety disorder.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss medical clearance issues for physical activity.
2. Discuss the benefits of any physical activity, such as improvement in well being, stress reduction, sleep, bowel regulation, and improved self image.
3. Discuss obstacles to a personal physical activity plan and solutions to those obstacles. Assist the patient in developing a personal physical activity plan.
4. Discuss the appropriate frequency, intensity, time, and type of activity.
5. Refer to community resources as appropriate.

GAD-FU FOLLOW-UP

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the importance of follow-up in the treatment of generalized anxiety disorder.

STANDARDS:

1. Discuss the importance of follow-up care.
2. Discuss the procedure for obtaining follow-up appointments.
3. Emphasize that appointments should be kept.

GAD-HPDP HEALTH PROMOTION, DISEASE PREVENTION

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the lifestyle changes necessary to promote and sustain healthy living.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that health and wellness refers to whole person (mind, body, and spirit) and is a positive state which results from healthy choices.
2. Explain healthy lifestyle choices (e.g., spirituality, social connections, exercise, nutrition) and avoidance of high-risk behaviors (e.g., smoking, alcohol and substance abuse, sex with multiple partners). Discuss the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
3. Discuss wellness as an individual responsibility to:
 - a. Learn how to be healthy.
 - b. Be willing to change.
 - c. Set small, realistic, sustainable goals.
 - d. Practice new knowledge.

- e. Get help when necessary.
4. Review the community resources available for help in achieving behavior changes.

GAD-IR INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

OUTCOME: The patient/family will receive information and referral for alternative or additional services as needed or desired.

STANDARDS:

1. Provide the patient/family with alternative or additional sources for care and services.
2. Provide the patient/family with assistance in securing alternative or additional resources as needed.

GAD-L LITERATURE

OUTCOME: The patient/family will receive literature about generalized anxiety disorder.

STANDARDS:

1. Provide the patient/family with literature on generalized anxiety disorder.
2. Discuss the content of the literature.

GAD-M MEDICATIONS

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the purpose, proper use, and expected outcomes of prescribed drug therapy.

STANDARDS:

1. Describe the name, strength, purpose, dosing directions, and storage of the medication.
2. Discuss the risks, benefits, and common or important side effects of the medication and follow up as appropriate.
3. Discuss any significant drug/drug, drug/food, and alcohol interactions, as appropriate.
4. Discuss the importance of full participation with the medication plan and that this is the patient's responsibility. Discuss any barriers to full participation.
5. Discuss the importance of keeping a list of all current prescriptions and over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, herbs, traditional remedies, and supplements. Encourage the patient to bring this list and pill bottles to appointments for medication reconciliation.

GAD-PSY PSYCHOTHERAPY

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the goals and process of psychotherapy in the treatment of GAD.

STANDARDS:

1. Review the reason for the initial referral for therapy as part of the care plan.
2. Explain that therapy may include individual, group, psycho-educational / therapeutic, talking circles, or other modalities.
3. Emphasize that full participation and follow-up are critical to treatment success.
4. Emphasize the importance of openness and honesty with the therapist.
5. Discuss issues of safety, confidentiality, and responsibility.
6. Explain to the patient that the therapist and the patient will establish goals and duration of therapy together.

GAD-SM STRESS MANAGEMENT

OUTCOME: The patient will understand the role of stress management in anxiety disorders.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that uncontrolled stress is linked with the onset of major depression, contributes to more severe symptoms of anxiety, and can interfere with the treatment of anxiety disorders.
2. Explain that effective stress management may reduce the severity of the patient's symptoms as well as help improve health and well-being.
3. Discuss that stress may exacerbate adverse health behaviors such as increased tobacco, alcohol, or other substance use as well as inappropriate eating, all of which can increase the severity of the anxiety and increase the risk of depression and suicidal behaviors.
4. Discuss various stress management strategies which may help maintain a healthy lifestyle. Examples may include:
 - a. Becoming aware of your own reactions to stress
 - b. Recognizing and accepting your limits
 - c. Talking with people you trust about your worries or problems
 - d. Setting realistic goals
 - e. Getting enough sleep
 - f. Maintaining a healthy diet
 - g. Exercising regularly

- h. Taking vacations
 - i. Practicing meditation, self-hypnosis, and positive imagery
 - j. Practicing physical relaxation methods such as deep breathing or progressive muscular relaxation
 - k. Participating in spiritual or cultural activities
5. Provide referrals as appropriate.

GAD-TX TREATMENT

OUTCOME: The patient/family will understand the treatment options that may be used to treat anxiety.

STANDARDS:

1. Explain that a combination of psychotherapy and medication interventions usually has better results than therapy or medication alone. The patient has a right to choose either option or both, and that the patient's active participation in the treatment decisions is critical to a good outcome.
2. Explain that therapists have different styles and orientations for treating GAD, and that no one approach is clearly more effective than others, although some styles may suit the patient better.
3. Explain that the treatment plan will be made by the patient and treatment team after reviewing available options. Explain that treatment for GAD may vary according to the patient's life circumstances, severity of the condition, and available resources.
4. Discuss the treatment plan which may include a combination of psychotherapy, pharmacologic, and lifestyle adaptation.
 - a. Counseling or psychotherapy is an effective treatment for GAD, and the length of therapy varies according to the patient's needs.
 - b. Medication may be prescribed on an individualized basis, according to need. **Refer to GAD-M.**
 - c. Regular exercise will usually contribute significantly to improving the symptoms of GAD and in some cases will eliminate the need for medication. **Refer to GAD-EX.**
5. Discuss the importance of fully participating in the treatment plan, including scheduled follow-up.